



**U.S. Small Business Administration Names
The Institute for Women Entrepreneurs (IWE)
*Women's Business Center of Excellence***



Santa Ana, CA – The Institute for Women Entrepreneurs (IWE), under the leadership and direction of Sallie Salinas, has been named the Women's Business Center of Excellence by the U.S. Small Business Administration's Santa Ana District Office. The District serves the counties of Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino. This selection was announced by District Director J. Adalberto Quijada who stated, "Sallie Salinas thrives on making women entrepreneurs succeed and by accepting no excuses from anyone who comes to the center. Sallie and the IWE are surpassing all expectations."

The IWE is a non-profit organization which provides business development services including personalized business consulting, technical training, mentoring and support needed to start and grow successful businesses. The center's director is Sallie Salinas. The IWE opened in 2006, partnering with the SBA, community leaders, women's associations and business organizations to make a difference in the community. The contribution the IWE makes is evident in its results. The IWE has successfully trained over 5,890 entrepreneurs this year, exceeding a growth benchmark by 200% and created economic impact of over \$6 million. The IWE also offers a bi-annual expo which serves as an incubator to further refine and support the businesses started by IWE. Its clients report a 94% favorable rating, and they value not only the business guidance but also the personal empowerment received through counseling and mentoring. Since its opening, the IWE moved to a larger facility and provided over 1200 hours of direct counseling. It also integrated Spanish into its services and started a collaborative series of non-credit courses through Santa Ana College/Market Place Education Center to broaden its services to the Spanish speaking community.

Under the direction of Sallie Salinas, Director of the IWE, and the commitment of her professional team, IWE's outreach expanded statewide. The IWE took center stage in front of 600 CEOs in San Francisco at the California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce annual convention, presented twice at the national Mexican

American Opportunity Fund conference and has established its presence with recognition through print, radio and media for its outreach.

Ms. Salinas is a visionary whose passion and commitment to the unique needs of women entrepreneurs led her to pursue a multi-year grant and effectively launch the first SBA Women's Business Center in Orange County through the Rancho Santiago Community College District Foundation. She serves as a member of the Small Business Development Center board, Orange County President's Council, EOPS Advisory Board, President's Forum, and is a member of the National Latina Business Women's Association, National Hispanic Business Women Association and serves as strategic business counsel to the California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce. One of Sallie's proudest achievements has been the launching of the IWE.

The Institute for Women Entrepreneurs led by Sallie Salinas and other small business owners and champions will be honored at the 46th Annual Small Business Week Awards event on June 4th hosted by the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians in the Yuhaviatam Room at 777 San Manuel Blvd., Highland, CA.

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